



Catcher in the Rye Analysis Guide

The Red Hunting Hat

Holden's hunting hat means a lot to him. Have you noticed anything about it? Write about Holden's hat. Explain how Holden got the hat. Write about the many different ways he wears it and what each way means. Discuss the color and what the hat symbolizes. What purpose does the hat serve for Holden? Include quotes about his hat.

“It Just About Killed Me”

Salinger's diction for Holden Caulfield is unique and interesting. His voice is easily distinguished among literary characters. What do you find interesting/unique/distinguishable about Holden's style of speech? Find specific examples from the novel.

“Jane's Kings”

It is apparent that Holden cares very much for Jane. It seems she is the only person he really likes. Why then wouldn't he go see her when she was at his school with Stradlater? Discuss why Holden likes Jane. He mentions that Jane “kept all her kings in the back row,” is this metaphor for something?

A.K.A

Throughout the novel, Holden develops aliases and pretends to be other people. What purpose does this serve? What are some examples of people with aliases? Pick one of Holden's aliases and describe the situation. Who is he talking to? What kind of person does he become? What are some possible reasons he became someone else?

Phone calls

Throughout the novel Holden attempts to call many people for help. Holden wants to call Jane several times, but never does. Why do you think this is so? Who else does Holden attempt to call?

Suitcases

In the middle of the novel, Holden goes into great detail about suitcases. What does he say? Is he speaking literally or figuratively? If figuratively, what do they stand for and why does he really discuss them?

“The Liars Club”

Do you think Holden is telling the complete truth? Is he making things up and/or leaving things out? Characters like Holden are often referred to as unreliable narrators. This means you cannot rely on them to tell the complete truth. They will only tell you what they want you to believe.

“The Museum”

The one place Holden feels comfort and happiness is in the museum. Why does he like it there so much? What specifically does he say about it?

‘Allie’

Although Allie, Holden’s brother, is not actually alive in the novel, he is an important character. Holden even talks to him throughout the novel. This is called an apostrophe. Why is he so important to understanding the novel?

“The Patterns of the Mind”

When Holden is visiting Carl Luce, he says that his father is a psychoanalyst and can help him to “recognize the patterns of his mind.” What does this mean? Was Holden asking for Carl Luce’s company because he was lonely, or was there an ulterior motive?

“Allie’s Funeral”

Holden informs us that he did not attend Allie’s funeral. What was his reason why he did not? What are your thoughts on this? What is the significance of Holden not being at Allie’s funeral? Does it affect him? Why or why not?

‘Mr. Antolini’

The scene where Holden goes to stay with Mr. Antolini is one of great controversy. What are your thoughts on this scene?

“Disappearing”

Holden states several times through out the novel that he feels as if he is disappearing. Particularly at the end of the novel he more frequently states he feels this way. What is the significance of this? What could it mean?

“Symbols”

There are many symbols in the novel. What are some that you find significant? Explain your answer.

Reading Schedule:

12/5: Chapters 1-3 12/6: Chapters 4-6 12/7: Chapters 7-9 12/8: Chapters 10-12

12/9: Catch Up/Get Ahead Day 12/12: Chapters 13-16 12/13: Chapters 17-20

12/14 and 12/15: Read in class...finish novel for 12/16. Reading Check Quiz 40 points